



# THE WALKING DEAD 43



Cliff 107

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IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

# THE WALKING DEAD™

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## Previously:

The Governor and the forces of Woodbury arrived at the gates of the prison--ready for a fight! But how did he survive his torture at the hands of Michonne?

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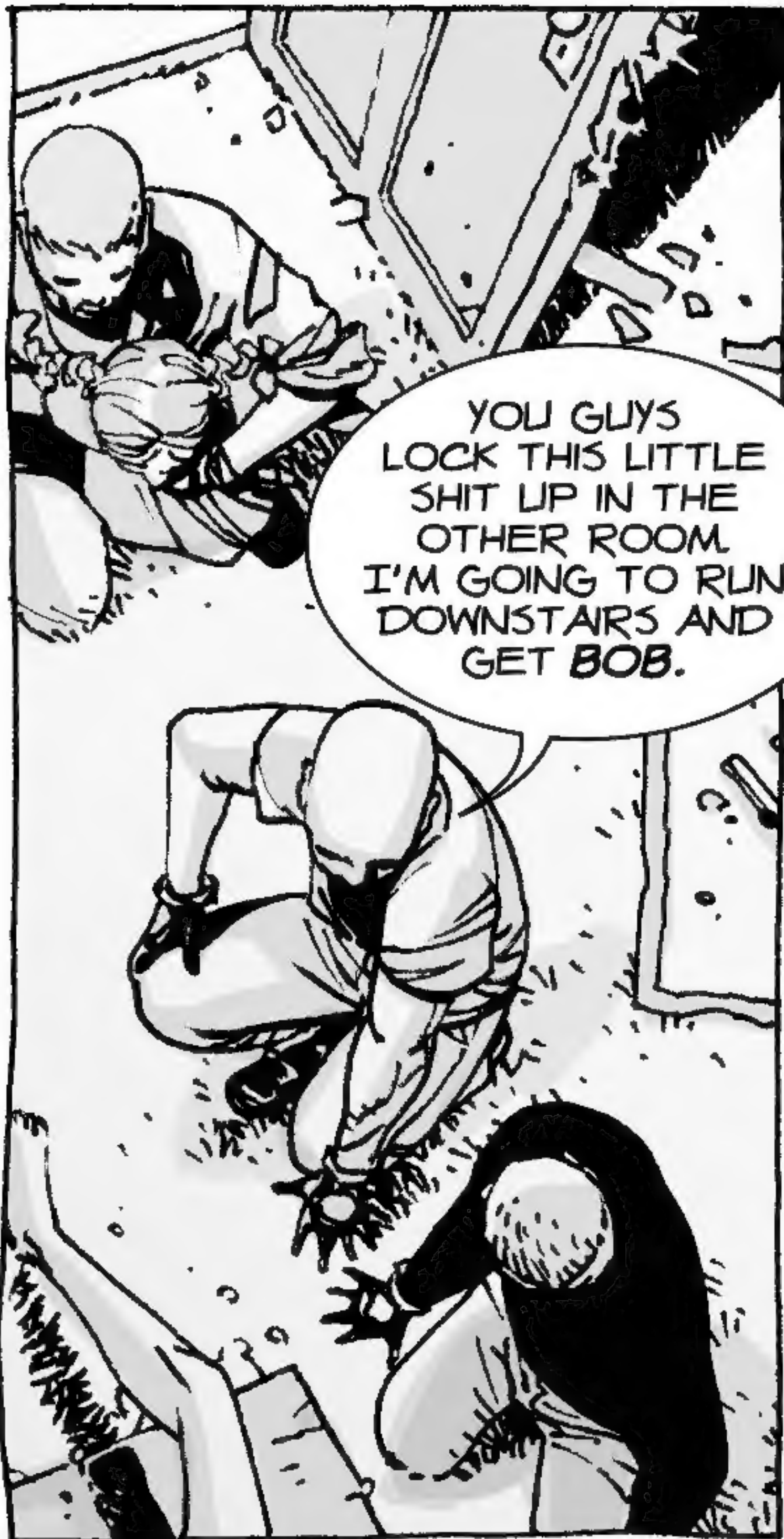












YOU GUYS  
LOCK THIS LITTLE  
SHIT UP IN THE  
OTHER ROOM.  
I'M GOING TO RUN  
DOWNSTAIRS AND  
GET **BOB**.



BOB? THAT  
FUCKING DRUNK  
THAT'S ALWAYS  
SITTING DOWNSTAIRS  
BY THE DOOR?  
WHAT THE HELL  
CAN **HE**  
DO?!



PROBABLY  
NOT **MUCH**--  
BUT MORE  
THAN EITHER  
OF US CAN  
DO.

JUST  
LOCK THAT  
FUCKING  
BRAT UP!



**BOB!** **LIPSTAIRS!**  
GET  
UP--WE  
NEED YOUR  
HELP!  
**NOW!**

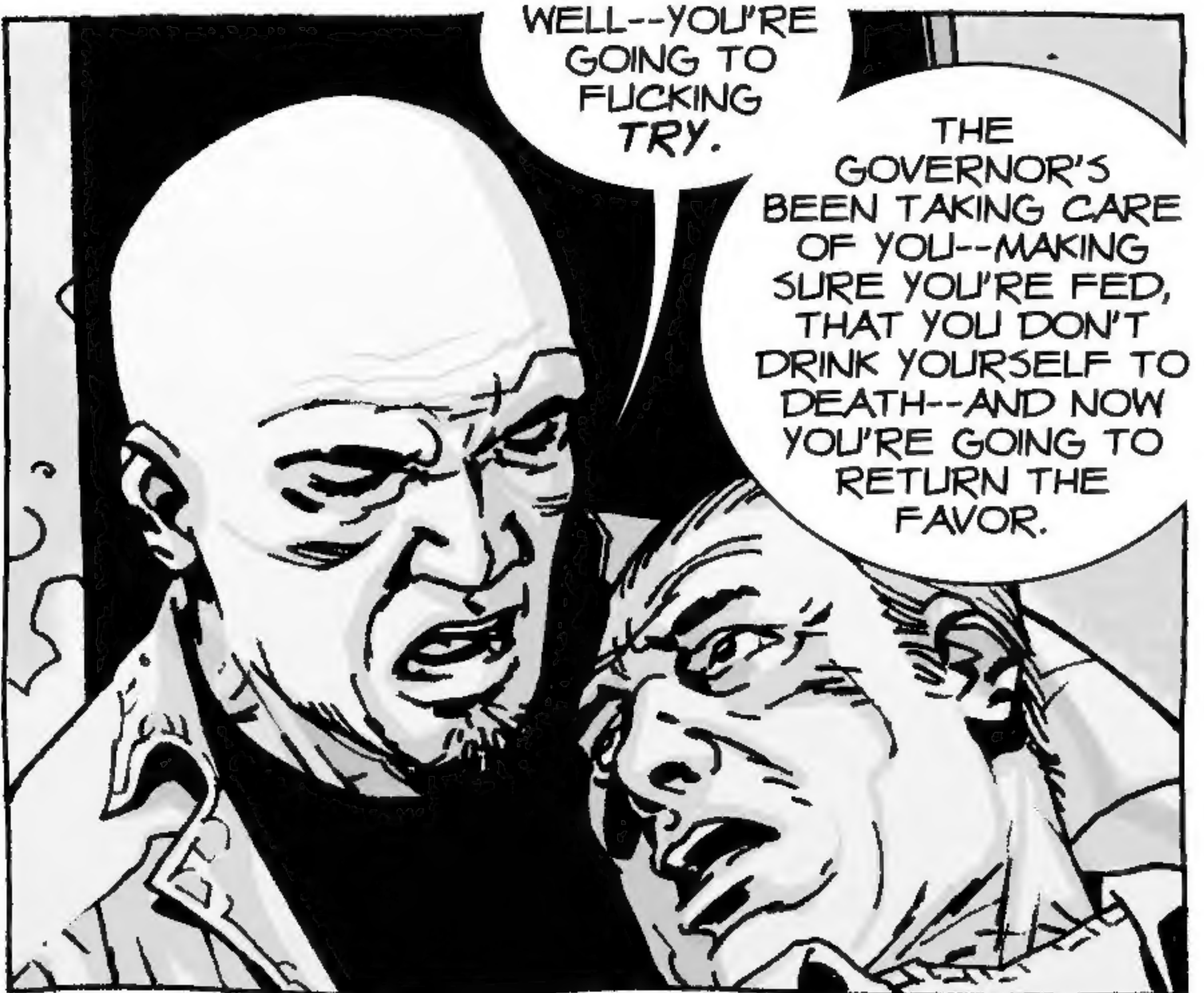
WHAT?!  
WHY?!



YOU WERE AN  
ARMY MEDIC  
RIGHT?!

FOR  
ABOUT TWO  
WEEKS **FORTY**  
**GODDAMN**  
**YEARS**  
AGO!

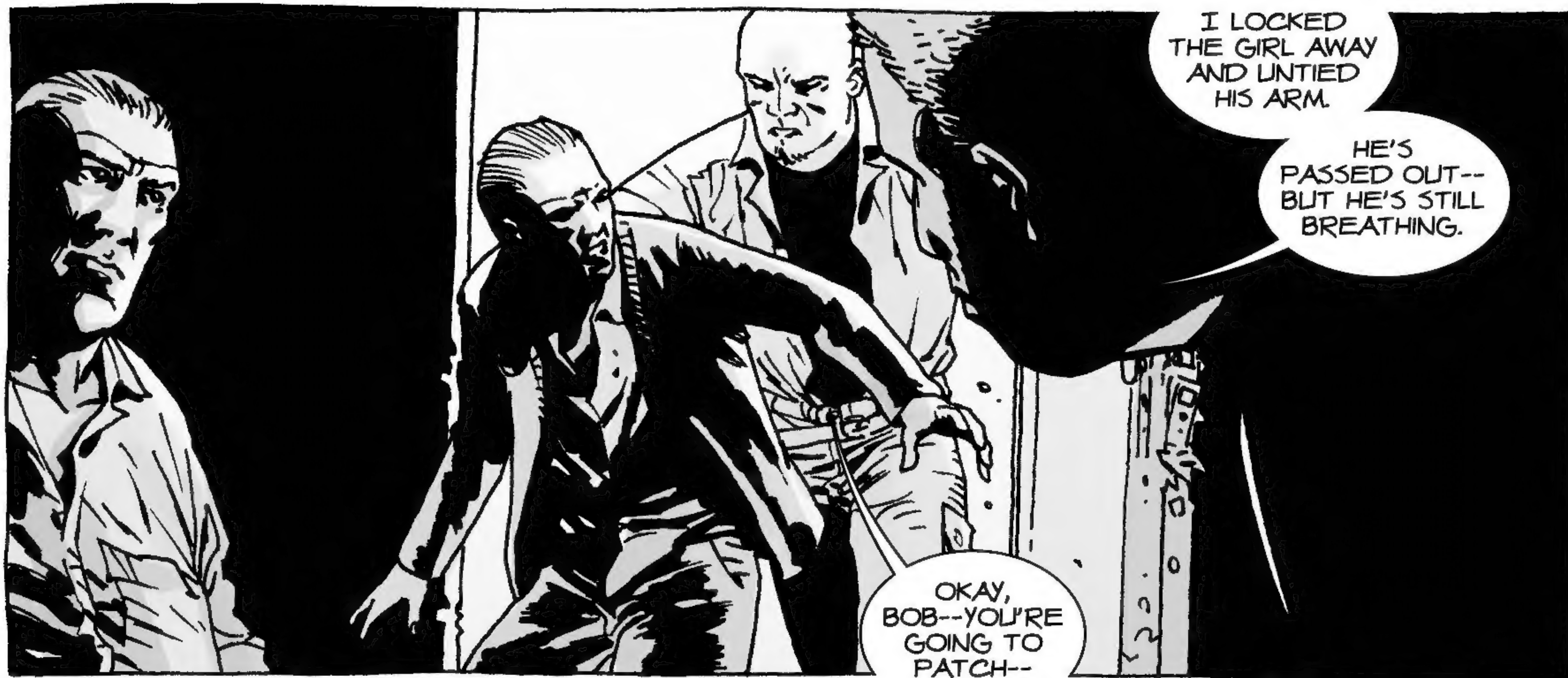
I CAN'T  
DO SHIT.



WELL--YOU'RE  
GOING TO  
FUCKING  
**TRY.**

THE  
GOVERNOR'S  
BEEN TAKING CARE  
OF YOU--MAKING  
SURE YOU'RE FED,  
THAT YOU DON'T  
DRINK YOURSELF TO  
DEATH--AND NOW  
YOU'RE GOING TO  
RETURN THE  
FAVOR.









**THEN  
FUCKING DO  
SOMETHING!**



I'M GOING TO NEED  
CLEAN BANDAGES,  
TAPE--AND SOME  
PEROXIDE. THEN  
WE'LL NEED TO GET  
HIM TO THE  
INFIRMARY.

I'LL  
DO WHAT  
I CAN.







HOW LONG?

WERE YOU OUT? ALMOST A WEEK. YOU WERE AWAKE A BIT HERE AND THERE--BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL REMEMBER ANYTHING.



DID YOU FIND DOC STEVENS? FORCE HIM TO PATCH ME UP?

NOPE. DOC'S DEAD. THEY FOUND HIS BODY WHEN THEY WENT LOOKING FOR THAT BITCH AND HER FRIENDS. DIDN'T FIND THEM--BUT HIS BODY WAS RIGHT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF OUR FENCE.



HE DIDN'T LAST LONG.



SERVES THAT FUCKER RIGHT.

SO IF THE DOC'S GONE--HOW THE FUCK AM I NOT DEAD?





BOB.

BOB?!



THAT'S **RIDICULOUS**.  
THAT OLD DRUNK  
COULDN'T DRAW A  
STRAIGHT LINE--LET  
ALONE PATCH ME UP.  
HE REFUSED TO BE  
DOC'S ASSISTANT--  
MADE THAT **FUCKING**  
GIRL DO IT.



HE DIDN'T HAVE TO DO  
MUCH--THANK GOD. HE  
SAID YOUR ARM WAS SEALED  
UP GOOD--STERILIZED  
ENOUGH BY THE FIRE, BUT  
HE STILL CLEANED  
YOU UP REAL  
GOOD.

WHEN SHE  
CUT OFF YOUR--  
UH--WHEN SHE  
NICKED YOUR THIGH,  
BOB SAID IT MISSED A  
MAJOR ARTERY, SO  
THERE WASN'T MUCH  
BLOOD LOSS. WOULD  
HAVE KILLED YOU  
FOR SURE IF  
SHE'D HIT IT,  
THOUGH.

THE EYE  
ALMOST GOT  
INFECTED--  
BUT DIDN'T.

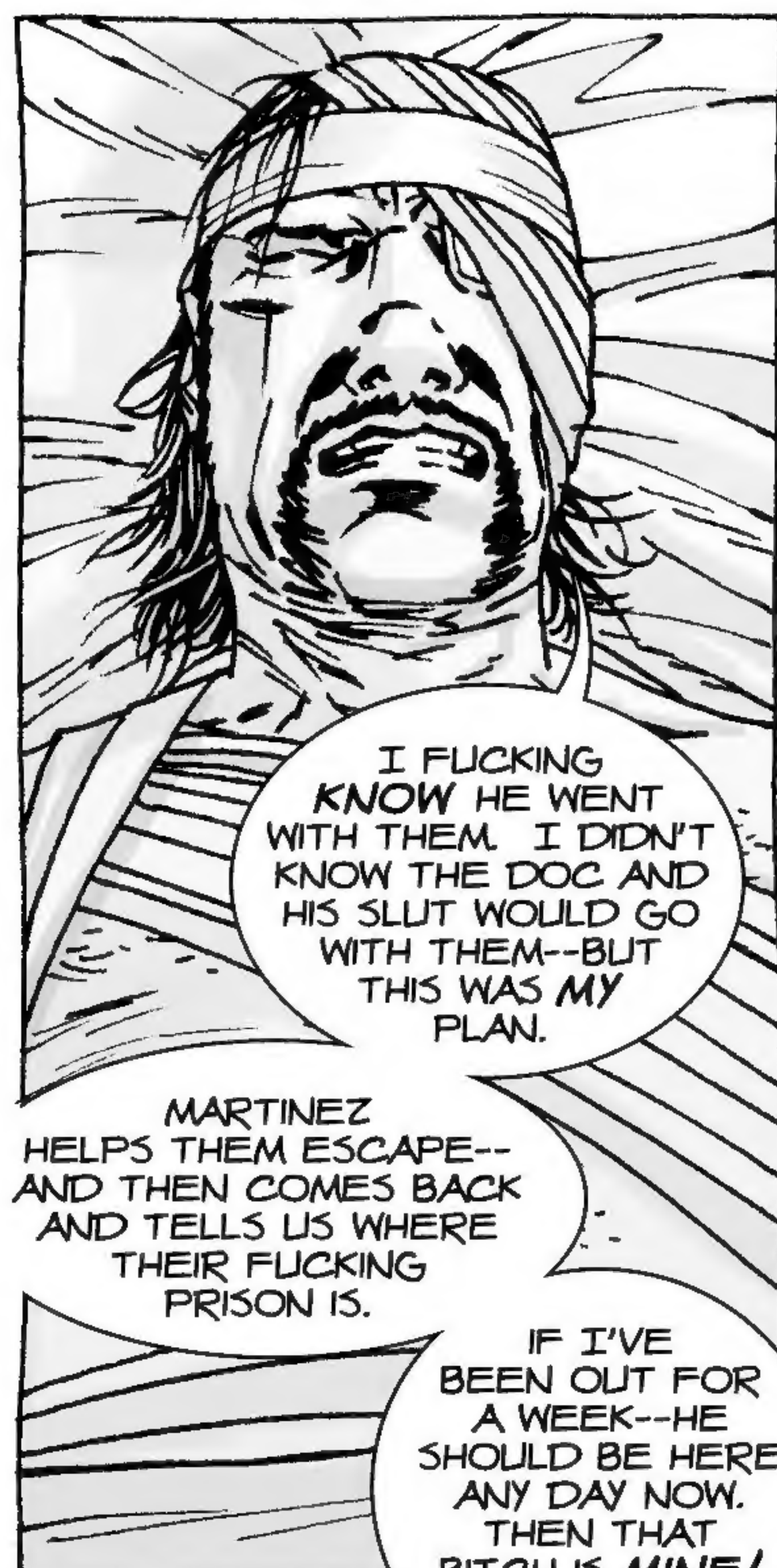
HE SAID  
SHE WAS REAL  
CAREFUL. HE  
THINKS SHE  
**WANTED** TO  
LEAVE YOU ALIVE--  
LIKE SHE HAD  
MORE PLANS  
FOR YOU.

PLANS FOR  
ME?! WAIT  
UNTIL I HEAR  
BACK FROM  
MARTINEZ.

I COULD  
FILL A **FUCKING**  
BOOK WITH THE  
SHIT I'VE GOT  
PLANNED FOR  
HER.



UH...  
MARTINEZ  
WENT WITH  
THEM.



I **FUCKING**  
KNOW HE WENT  
WITH THEM. I DIDN'T  
KNOW THE DOC AND  
HIS SLUT WOULD GO  
WITH THEM--BUT  
THIS WAS MY  
PLAN.

MARTINEZ  
HELPS THEM ESCAPE--  
AND THEN COMES BACK  
AND TELLS US WHERE  
THEIR **FUCKING**  
PRISON IS.

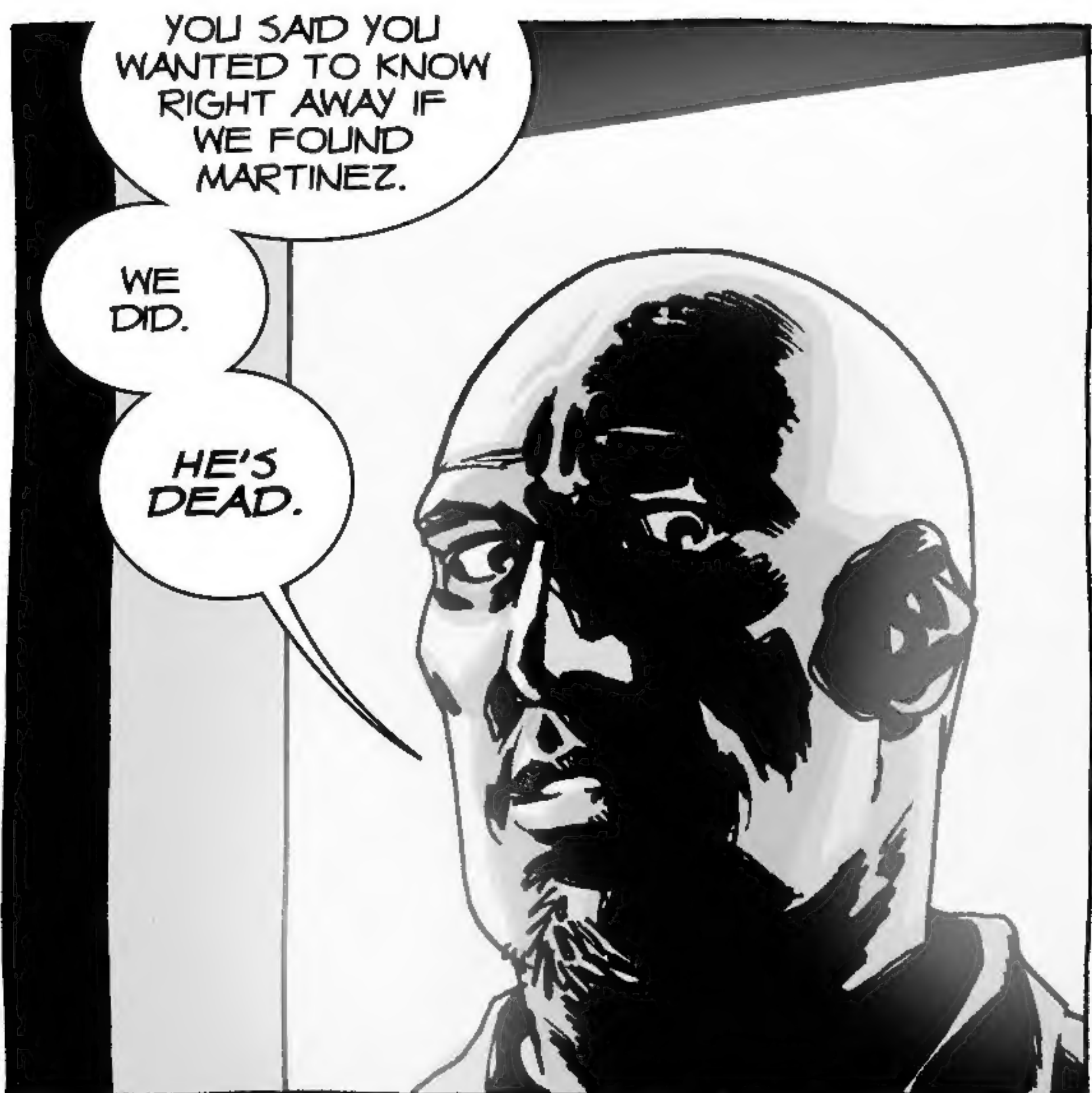
IF I'VE  
BEEN OUT FOR  
A WEEK--HE  
SHOULD BE HERE  
ANY DAY NOW.  
THEN THAT  
BITCH IS **MINE!**





CAN'T  
YOU SEE  
I'M  
BUSY?

SORRY TO  
INTERRUPT...



YOU SAID YOU  
WANTED TO KNOW  
RIGHT AWAY IF  
WE FOUND  
MARTINEZ.

WE  
DID.

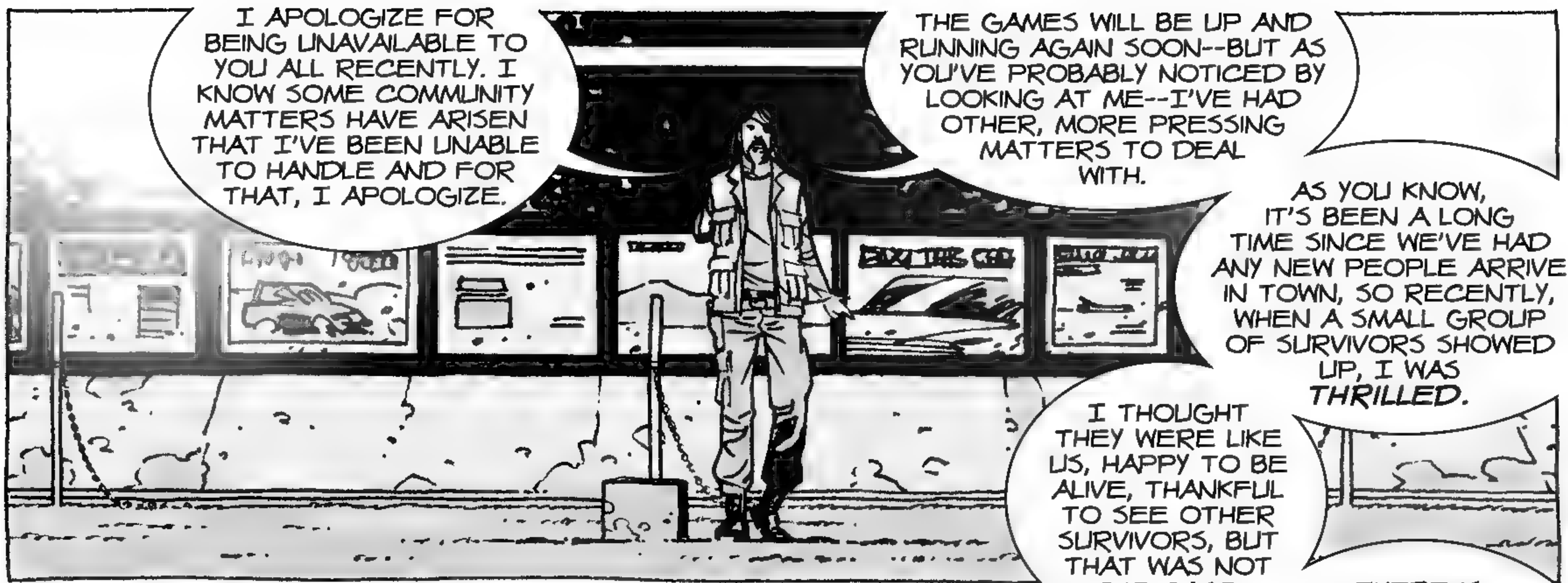
HE'S  
DEAD.



≡SIGH.≡

I THINK  
IT'S TIME FOR  
ME TO  
ADDRESS THE  
PEOPLE.





I APOLOGIZE FOR BEING UNAVAILABLE TO YOU ALL RECENTLY. I KNOW SOME COMMUNITY MATTERS HAVE ARISEN THAT I'VE BEEN UNABLE TO HANDLE AND FOR THAT, I APOLOGIZE.

THE GAMES WILL BE UP AND RUNNING AGAIN SOON--BUT AS YOU'VE PROBABLY NOTICED BY LOOKING AT ME--I'VE HAD OTHER, MORE PRESSING MATTERS TO DEAL WITH.

AS YOU KNOW, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE HAD ANY NEW PEOPLE ARRIVE IN TOWN, SO RECENTLY, WHEN A SMALL GROUP OF SURVIVORS SHOWED UP, I WAS THRILLED.

I THOUGHT THEY WERE LIKE US, HAPPY TO BE ALIVE, THANKFUL TO SEE OTHER SURVIVORS, BUT THAT WAS NOT THE CASE.

THERE IS EVIL IN THIS WORLD--AND NOT ALL OF IT IS IN THE FORM OF THOSE UNDEAD MONSTERS CLAWING AT OUR FENCES.



AT FIRST I HAD NO IDEA WHAT THEY WERE CAPABLE OF. I TRUSTED THEM--IT WAS A GRAVE MISTAKE.

THEY NEEDED SUPPLIES, SOME THINGS WE SEEMED TO HAVE PLENTY OF. THEY LIVE IN A NEARBY PRISON, THEY TOOK OUR HEAD OF SECURITY, MARTINEZ BACK WITH THEM--TO SHOW HIM AROUND.



THERE WAS TALK OF COMBINING THE CAMPS--ONE GROUP MOVING TO THE SAFEST PLACE TO LIVE.

SOME OF THEM STAYED BEHIND--AND ONE NIGHT, WHILE MY GUARD WAS DOWN, THEY TORTURED ME--MUTILATED ME... AND LEFT ME FOR DEAD.

THEY ESCAPED--BUT ALONG THE WAY, THEY KILLED DOCTOR STEVENS. THEY'RE RUTHLESS, INHUMAN SAVAGES!

I FEARED FOR MARTINEZ' LIFE--NOT KNOWING IF THEY'D TAKEN HIM PRISONER OR WORSE. BEFORE WE COULD SEND OUT A SEARCH PARTY--SOMETHING WAS LEFT AT THE MAIN GATE OVERNIGHT...



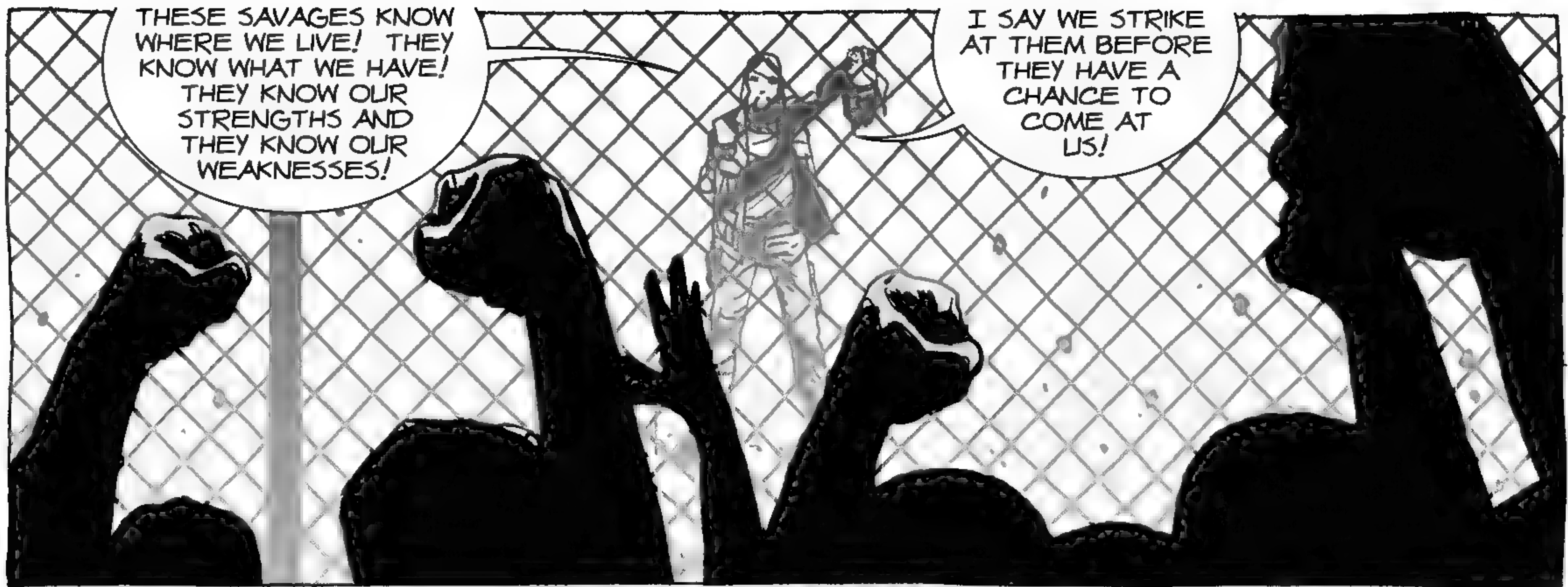




**MONSTERS!**







THESE SAVAGES KNOW WHERE WE LIVE! THEY KNOW WHAT WE HAVE! THEY KNOW OUR STRENGTHS AND THEY KNOW OUR WEAKNESSES!

I SAY WE STRIKE AT THEM BEFORE THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO COME AT US!

I REFUSE TO STAND DOWN AND ALLOW THEM TO DESTROY US--NOT AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE LOST--NOT AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE SACRIFICED!

WE'VE WORKED TOO HARD TO BUILD WHAT WE HAVE HERE--

AND I'LL BE **GODDAMNED** IF I'M GOING TO LET ANYONE TAKE IT AWAY FROM ME!



DAMN RIGHT!

FUCK YEAH!

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY.

FIRST WE NEED TO **FIND** THEM. I KNOW MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THIS AREA MIGRATED TO ATLANTA WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ORDERED US ALL INTO THE CITIES...

...BUT THERE HAS TO BE **SOMEONE** HERE WHO HAS AT LEAST A PASSING FAMILIARITY WITH THIS GENERAL AREA IF YOU DO--PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

BUT IT WILL GET DONE--THEY **WILL** BE PUNISHED. OF THAT, YOU CAN BE SURE.

THE PRISON THEY LIVE IN COULD BE FIVE MILES AWAY--OR IT COULD BE FIFTEEN, AND WE'RE NOT EVEN SURE OF WHICH DIRECTION IT'S IN. THIS IS NOT GOING TO BE EASY.





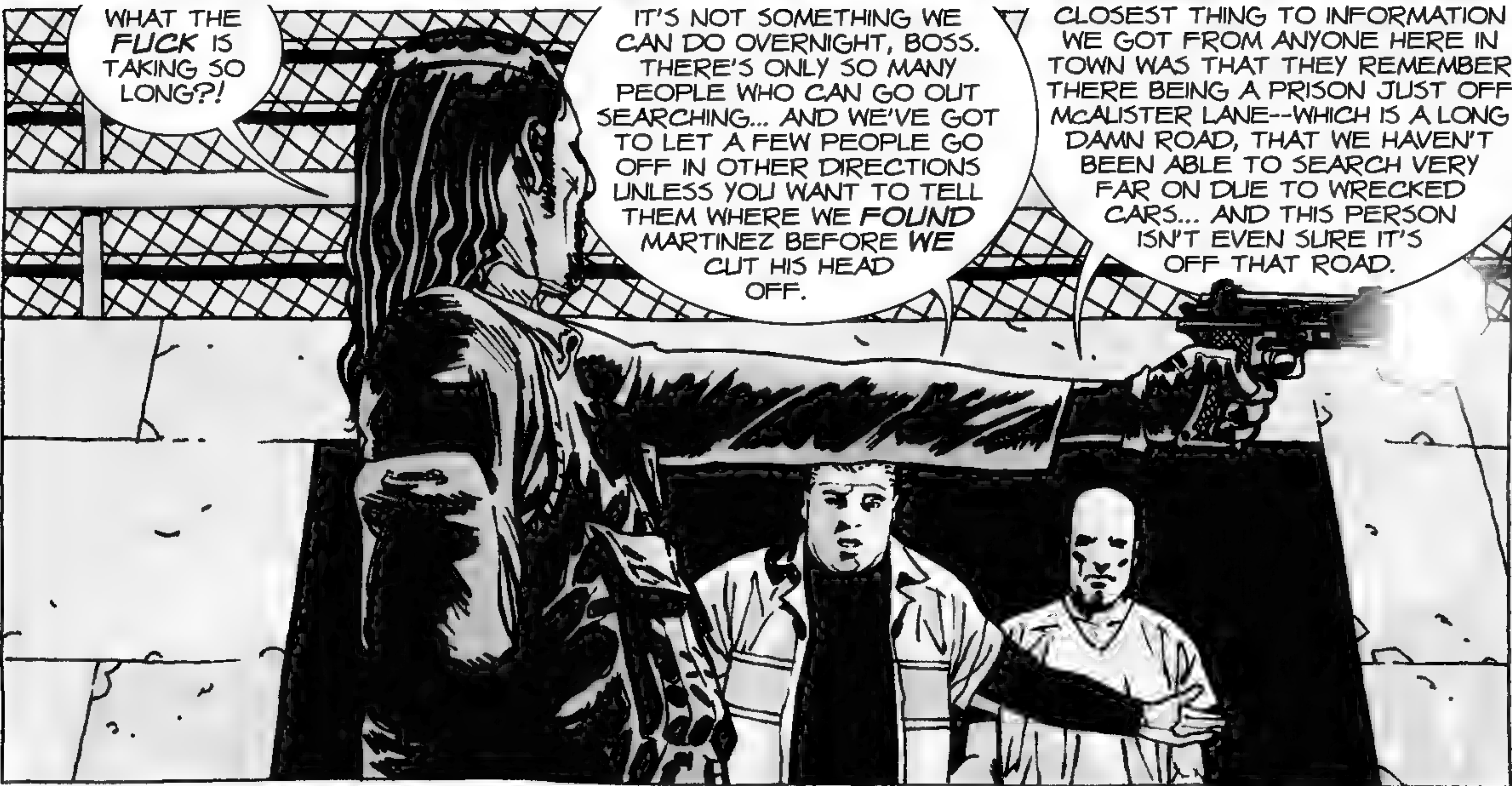
GLI-LINGH.



WHAT THE  
**FUCK** IS  
TAKING SO  
LONG?!

IT'S NOT SOMETHING WE  
CAN DO OVERNIGHT, BOSS.  
THERE'S ONLY SO MANY  
PEOPLE WHO CAN GO OUT  
SEARCHING... AND WE'VE GOT  
TO LET A FEW PEOPLE GO  
OFF IN OTHER DIRECTIONS  
UNLESS YOU WANT TO TELL  
THEM WHERE WE **FOUND**  
MARTINEZ BEFORE WE  
CUT HIS HEAD  
OFF.

CLOSEST THING TO INFORMATION  
WE GOT FROM ANYONE HERE IN  
TOWN WAS THAT THEY REMEMBER  
THERE BEING A PRISON JUST OFF  
McALISTER LANE--WHICH IS A LONG  
DAMN ROAD, THAT WE HAVEN'T  
BEEN ABLE TO SEARCH VERY  
FAR ON DUE TO WRECKED  
CARS... AND THIS PERSON  
ISN'T EVEN SURE IT'S  
OFF THAT ROAD.



WE'RE REAL SORRY,  
SIR. WE'RE TRYING  
AS HARD AS WE CAN.  
WE GOT MULTIPLE  
TEAMS GOING OUT  
EVERY DAY--JUST  
MAPPING THE  
AREA.

WE'RE LEARNING  
A LOT ABOUT THE  
AREA--IT'S JUST  
THAT WE CAN'T  
FIND THIS DAMN  
PRISON.

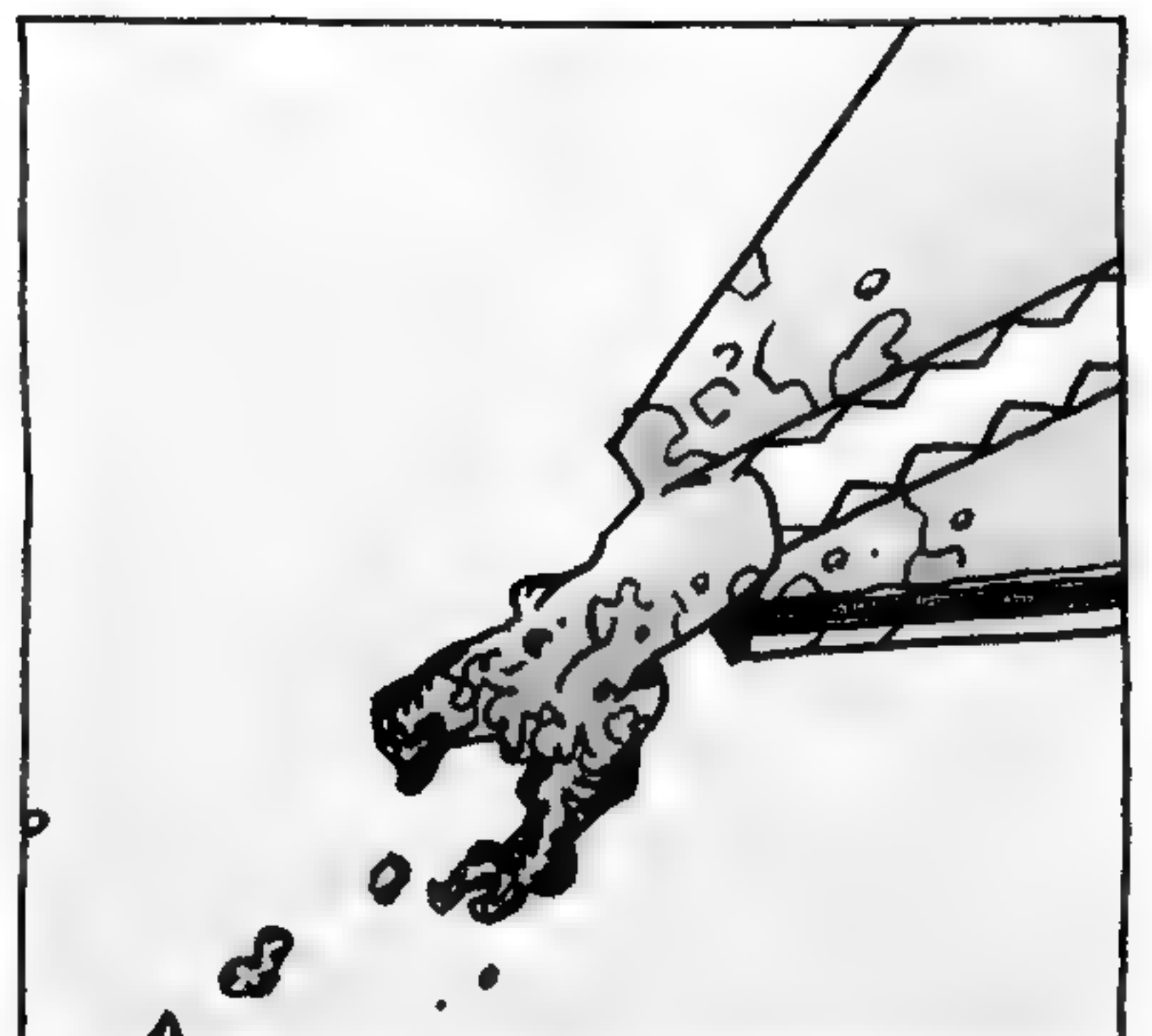
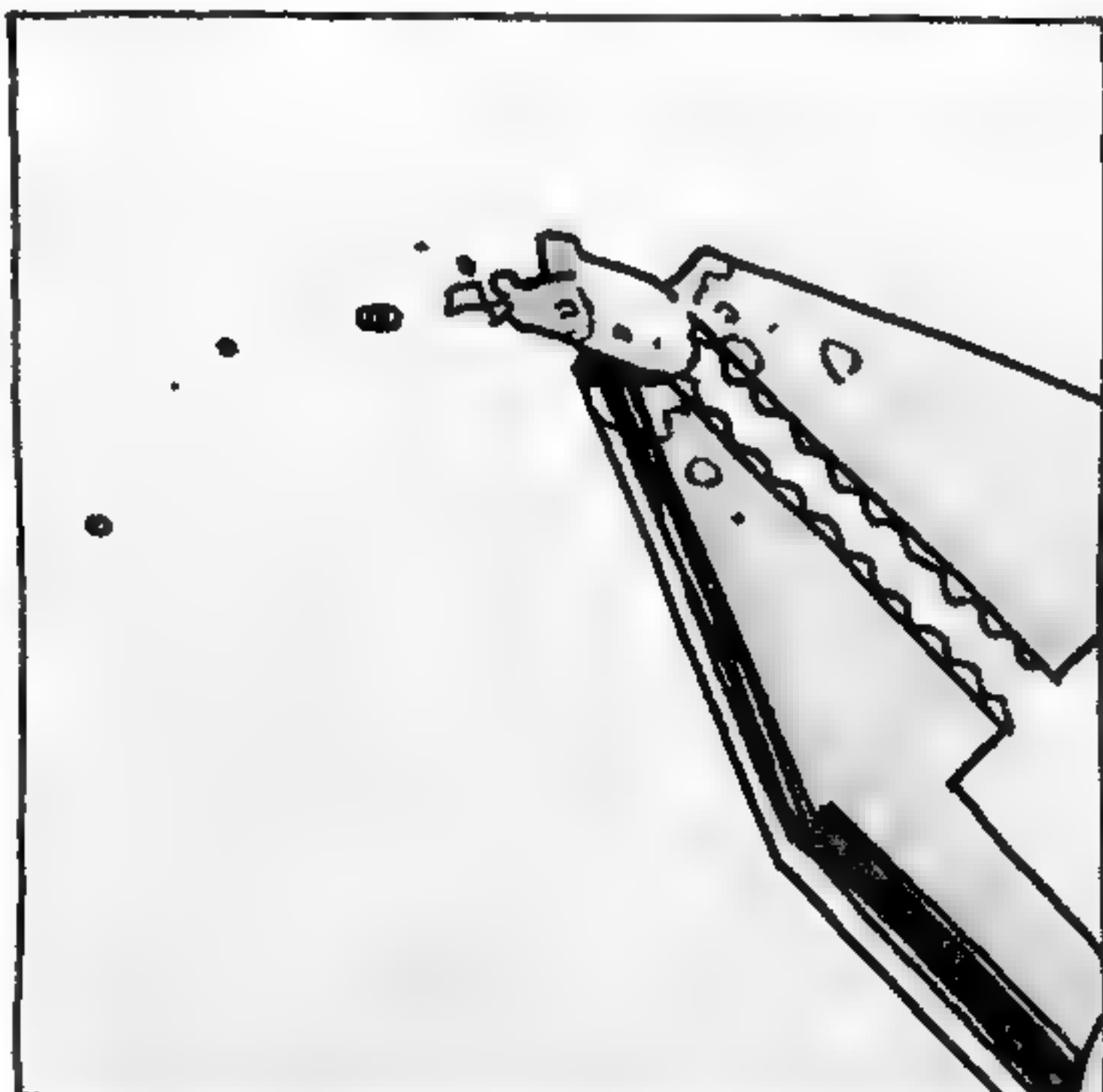
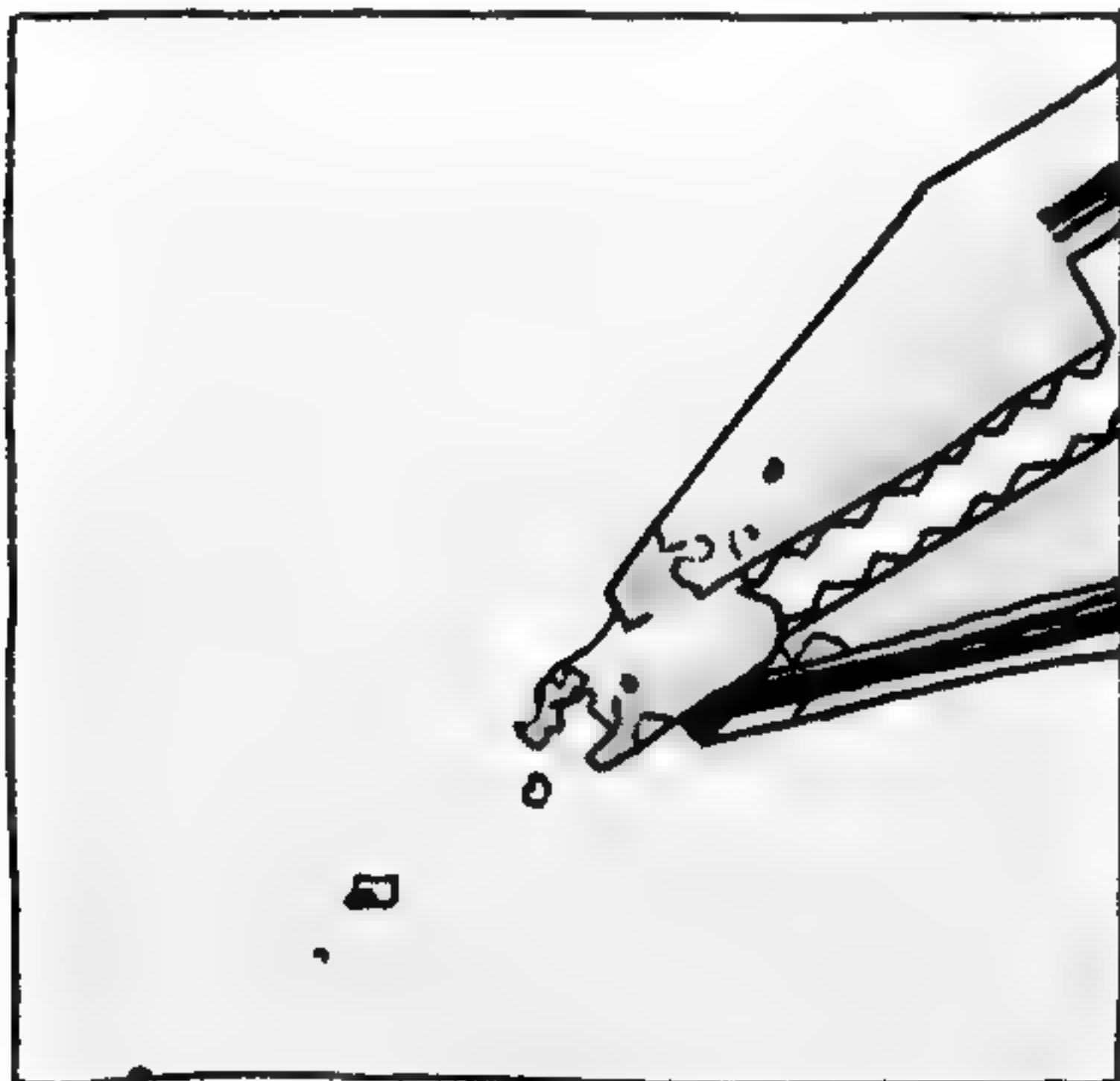
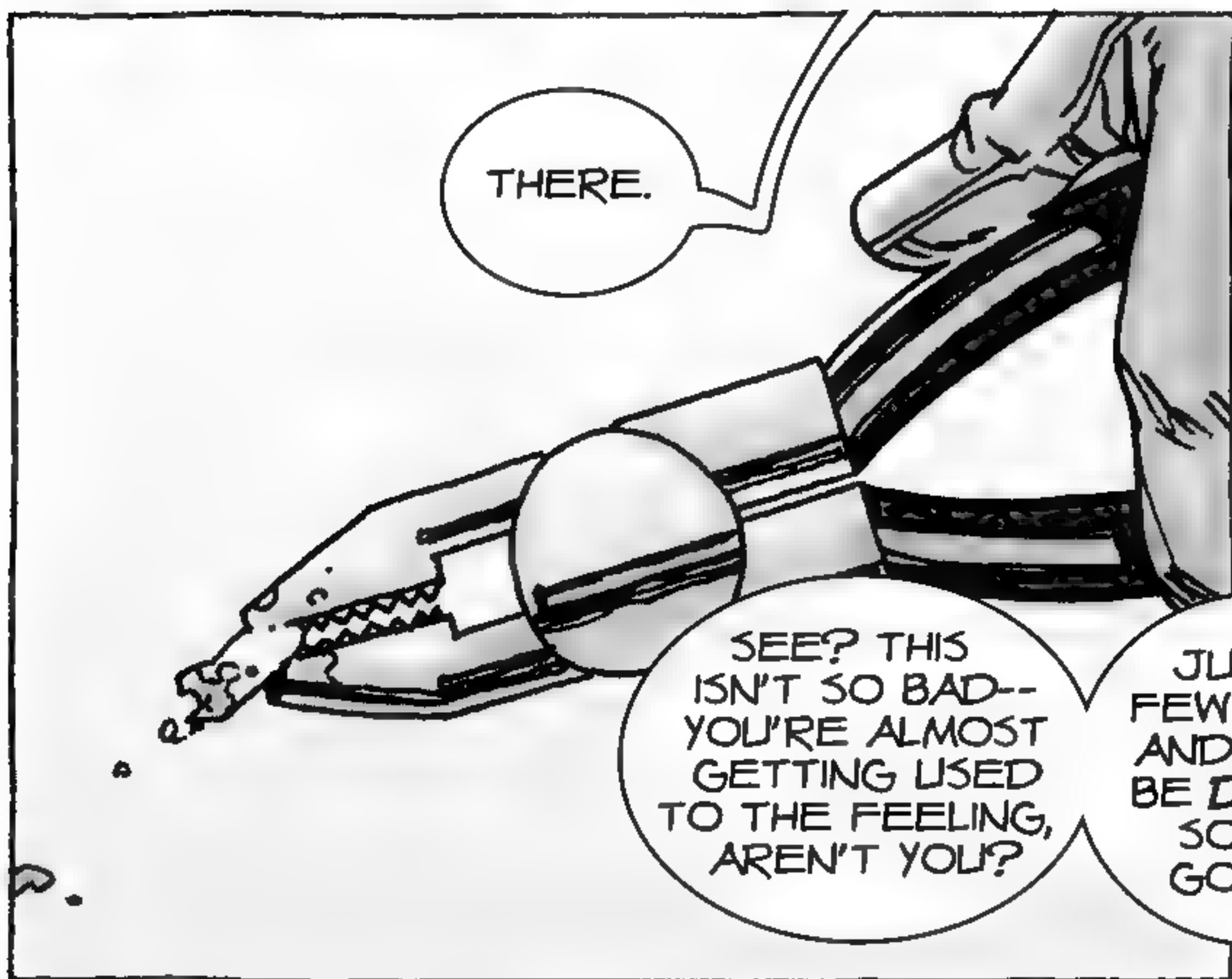
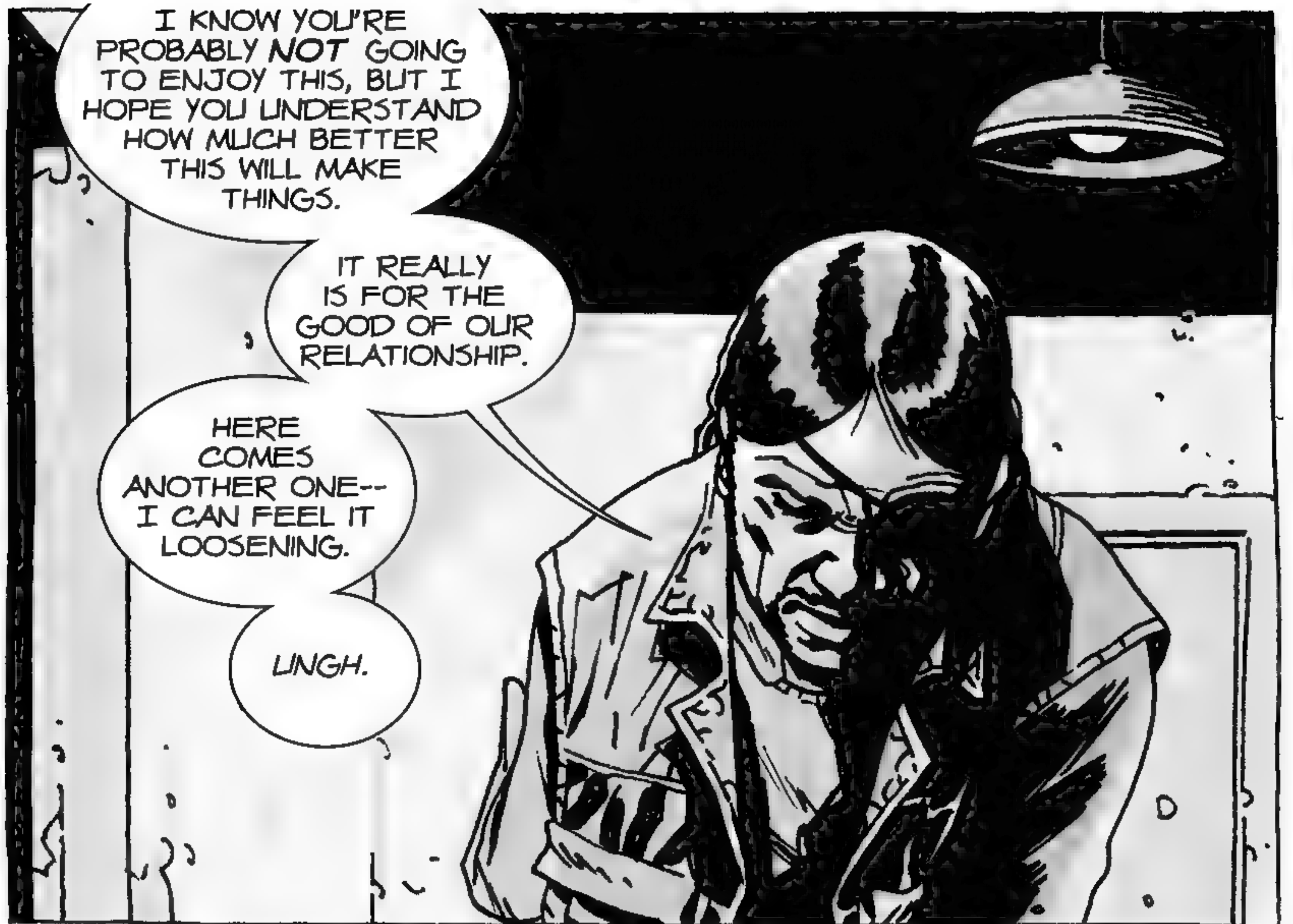


**FUCK!**

WHY THE HELL  
DID THAT BITCH  
HAVE TO CUT OFF  
MY **RIGHT** ARM. I'M  
ALMOST **FUCKING**  
**USELESS**  
WITH A GUN  
NOW.









GIVE  
DADDY  
A KISS.







BLAAUGH!



OH, HONEY...  
I'M SORRY.  
DON'T THINK  
ANYTHING  
OF IT.

I'M SURE--  
WITH TIME, I'LL  
GET USED  
TO THE  
TASTE.



DON'T  
LET IT  
UPSET  
Y--

**KNOCK!  
KNOCK!**



FUCK!



DID I SAY  
I WASN'T  
TO BE  
DISTURBED?

SORRY,  
BOSS--SOME  
SHIT'S GOING  
DOWN.

WAS AN  
EXPLOSION, WE  
THINK AT THE  
NATIONAL GUARD  
STATION--**HUGE**  
CLOUD OF SMOKE  
GOING INTO  
THE AIR.

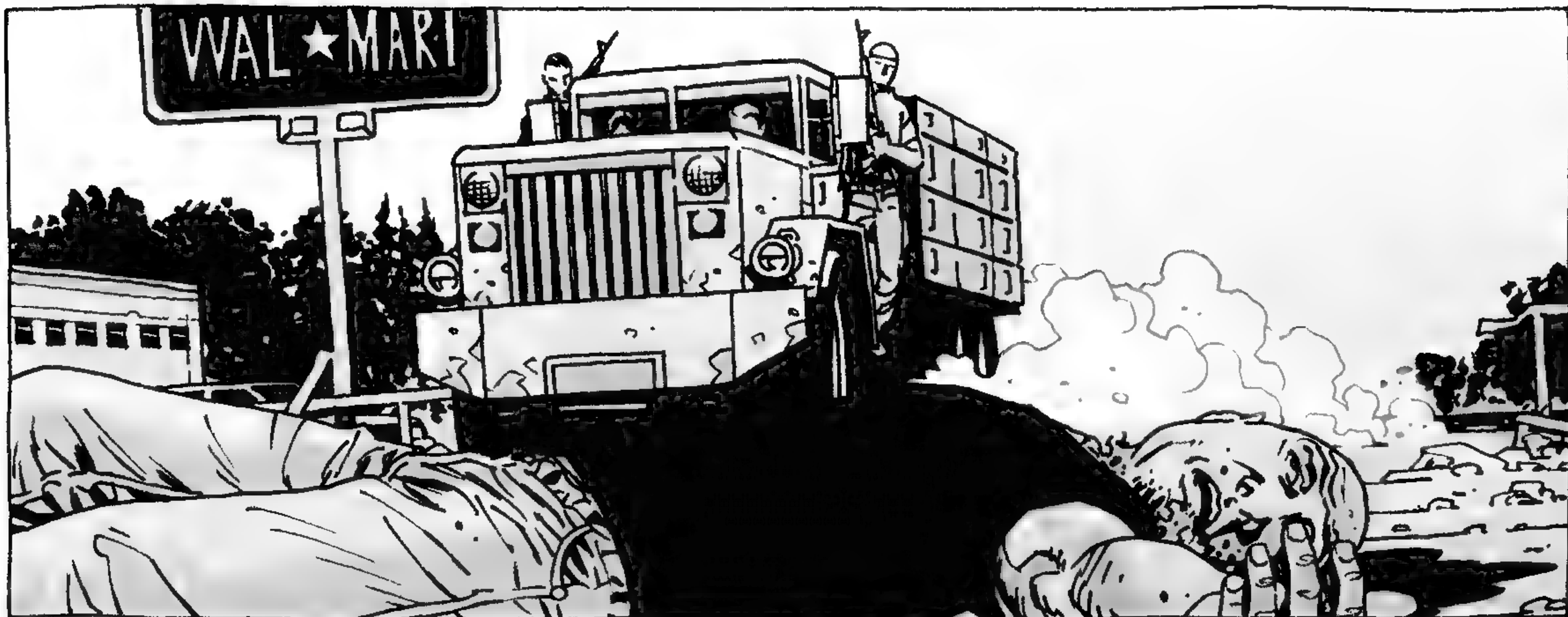


BRUCE TOOK SOME  
GUYS TO INVESTIGATE--  
THEY WERE GONE A  
FEW MINUTES AND  
WE'VE HEARD  
GUNFIRE NEARBY.

NEARBY?  
THEN JUST  
GET IN A  
CAR AND--  
**FUCK!**

FOLLOW  
ME.

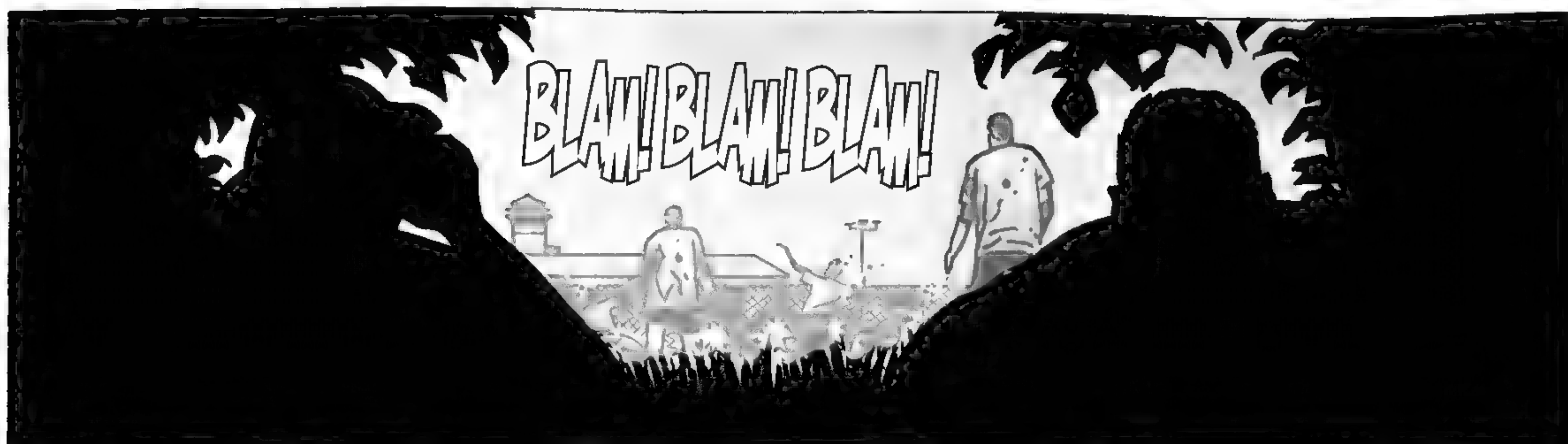




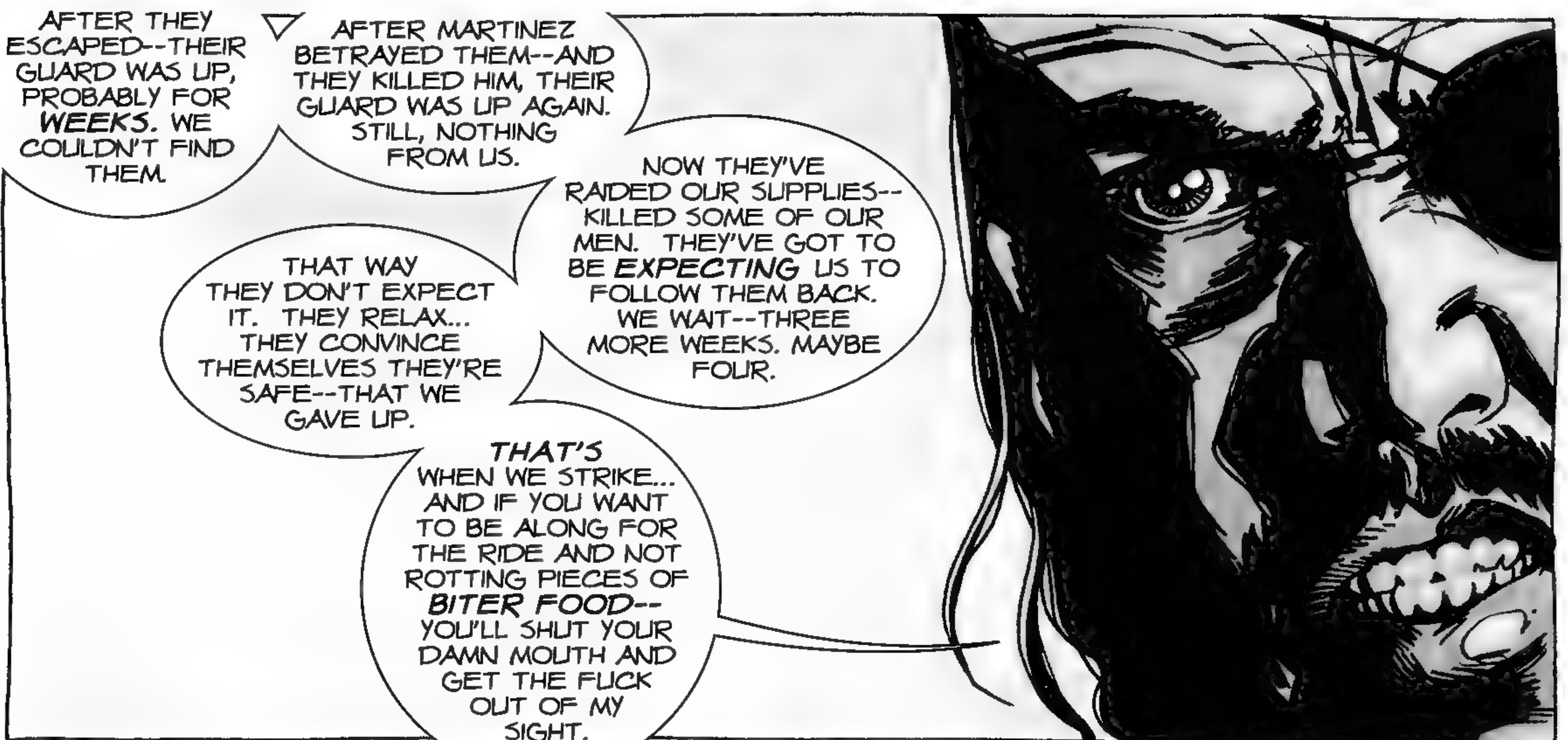




















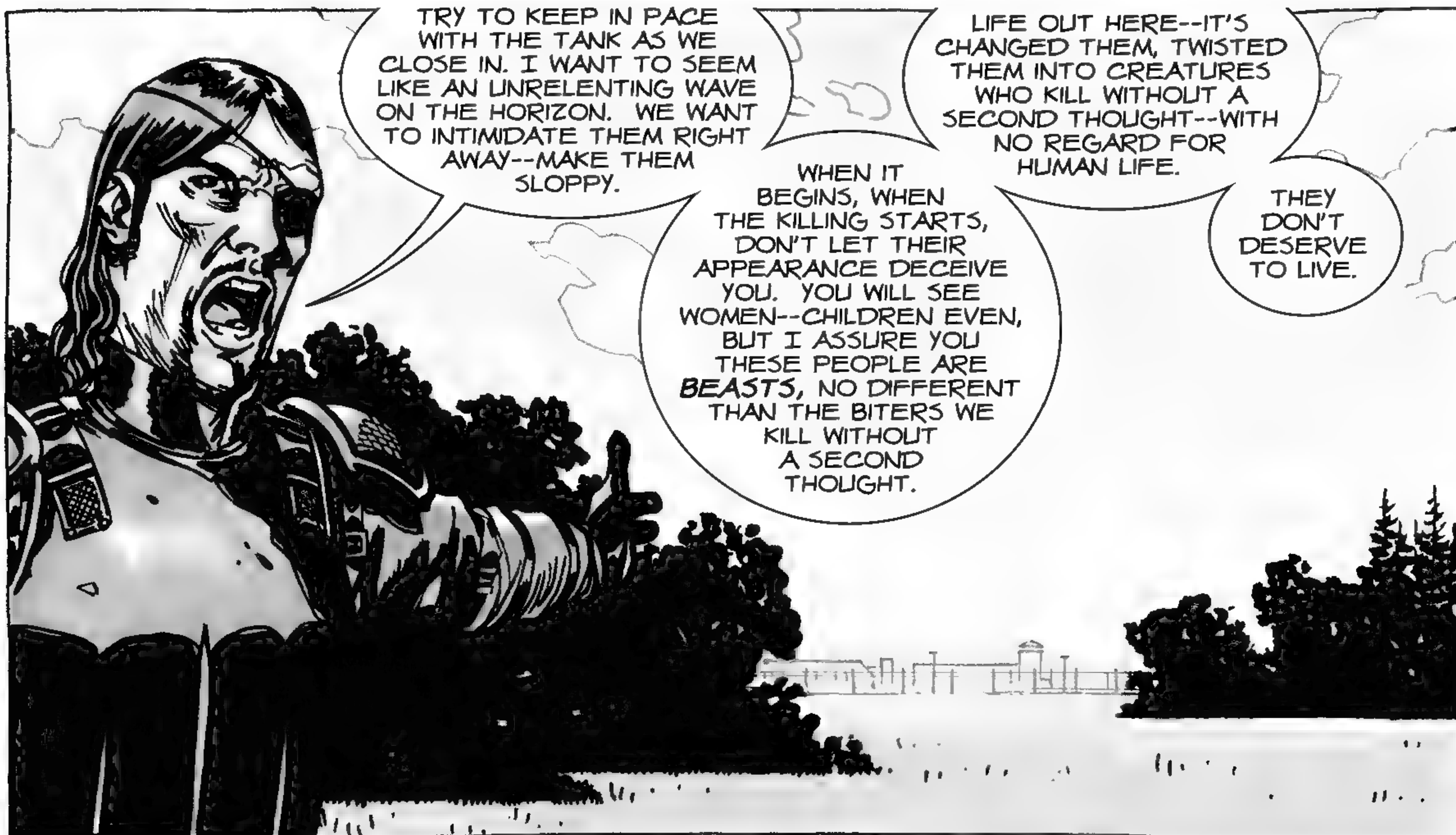








HERE WE  
ARE--SO CLOSE  
WE CAN SMELL  
THEIR EVIL.



TRY TO KEEP IN PACE  
WITH THE TANK AS WE  
CLOSE IN. I WANT TO SEEM  
LIKE AN UNRELENTING WAVE  
ON THE HORIZON. WE WANT  
TO INTIMIDATE THEM RIGHT  
AWAY--MAKE THEM  
SLOPPY.

LIFE OUT HERE--IT'S  
CHANGED THEM, TWISTED  
THEM INTO CREATURES  
WHO KILL WITHOUT A  
SECOND THOUGHT--WITH  
NO REGARD FOR  
HUMAN LIFE.

THEY  
DON'T  
DESERVE  
TO LIVE.

WHEN IT  
BEGINS, WHEN  
THE KILLING STARTS,  
DON'T LET THEIR  
APPEARANCE DECEIVE  
YOU. YOU WILL SEE  
WOMEN--CHILDREN EVEN,  
BUT I ASSURE YOU  
THESE PEOPLE ARE  
**BEASTS**, NO DIFFERENT  
THAN THE BITERS WE  
KILL WITHOUT  
A SECOND  
THOUGHT.



GET IN  
LINE WITH  
THE  
OTHERS.

YOU'RE  
NOT  
COMING?



I WOULDN'T  
MISS THIS FOR  
THE WORLD.

I'M  
RIDING IN  
THE TANK.



LET'S  
RIDE.







KILL  
THEM  
ALL!





# LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Best issue ever, folks!

I like that Robert thought this was going to be poorly received, but if you come back in three weeks for Walking Dead Weekly 46, you'll see otherwise! At any rate, let's look at some vintage letters!

-Sina Grace

Well, here we are with issue 43.

Yeah, this is the flashback issue. I'm thinking I might get some complaints for this issue (and I'm prepared, fuckers! Bring it on!) but there is some very important stuff being touched on in the issue, stuff that will be used later in the series, that is important to show.

I chose to do this issue this way, instead of telling the governor's story along the way as a subplot in the previous issues because that would pretty much kill any impact his attack on the prison would have.

I think it worked out, but I do understand that two issues in a row have ended at the exact same moment and that makes it seem like there's been no progression this issue... well, I promise it will be worth it in the long run.

Also, before anyone complains about the reused pages... this issue has the exact same amount of new pages as any other issue has. The reused pages are EXTRA. This issue is longer than usual issues.

Now--enough of that. Let's get some mail answered.

Kirkman,

I felt really bad for Rick. He should be able to bask in the joy of his new baby girl, but he has to saw off Dale's foot.

I thought this issue was going to be lighter in tone due to the baby's arrival, but this is one dark tale.

1. It looked like Dale was jealous over Andrea and Tyreese's interaction. Am I wrong?

You were right--and this has been pretty much resolved already.

2. When are you going to flesh out Axel's character? You follow me?

Soon, unless he dies.

On page 19 at the top, Tyreese has his shirt off, then in the last panel he has his shirt on. On page 20 Tyreese doesn't have his shirt on anymore. Is he really that indecisive on a hot day?

Yes, Charlie Adlard knows Tyreese inside and out, he knows what makes him tick... he knows when he wears a shirt and when he doesn't. Sometimes the change is quite sudden but that's just how Tyreese is.

Your upcoming issues' teaser "No One Is Safe" has me scared for Rick. This means that you're doing your job.

Sophea Uk

Thanks, lady... I'm trying.

Mr. Kirkman,

I appreciate you printing my letter in issue 39. I thought it might have delved into areas that were too deep to print, but I respect your allowing your readers to have their say no matter how far they go with their statements. I'm writing in now to clarify something I said that you took in a very negative way. I made a reference to Middle Eastern people that you took out of context, and I just wanted to explain it for you and anyone else who may write in thinking I'm some backwater redneck with a pessimistic view toward his fellow man. Specifically, I said that it would be more likely for a racist person to pleasure himself to an image of a Middle Eastern woman being violated rather than Michonne given the state of today's society following 9-11. You got the intended shock value of the statement and spoke up, but I don't think the point got through in the way I intended. You said that there are a fair share of sickos in this world, but they are few and far between. The statement I made was directed at those few and far between sickos and not society as a whole. The sad thing is that those few and far between sickos tend to get more press coverage than the average citizen, the kind of press coverage Charles L. tried to garnish with his own statements because, let's face it, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, so the Middle Eastern reference was intended to target those individuals and to reflect on the ignorance of some statements on the other side of the argument. My exact words were that I had more belief in the "possibility" of that among those sickos than what Charles L. attempted to pass off as the "honest truth" of a larger group of people in society. Simply put, his statement was nothing more than propaganda, and I wanted to say something equally shocking to counter it on a social level. I went through every stage of emotion in that letter. Perhaps the Middle Eastern reference was an ill-conceived comparison for the point I was trying to make, but I won't apologize to anyone who took my statements the wrong way... because you took them the wrong way and have no need to be offended, just as I believe no black person should be

offended by what happened to Michonne based simply on the color of her skin. Still, I wanted to set the record straight that I do have faith in my fellow man and society, and I have nothing but hope for an end

to this sad affair known as racism because the word itself has started to mutate into areas that frankly do not apply to the definition.

I'll admit freely that I am a "backwater redneck" of above-average intelligence and deep philosophies that may go in some weird directions that need to change for the better of my understanding of my peers, and I don't claim to know or understand everything even on the subject of racism. Those are simple facts given my birthplace and upbringing that have shaped my attitude. I'm sure there are things I never will understand, but I consider one thing an ultimate truth: everyone is racist, and anyone who says they are not is lying either to themselves or to their peers. I come from a family background of long-standing racism, but I have fought my elder relatives to instill an opposing viewpoint that we are all equal as human beings regardless even of constant reminders that some of us are of a particular skin color, nationality, or intelligence bracket. When I look at an individual, despite any nagging racism or preconceived notion in the back of my soul that I fight off with a passion, I do my damndest to see only the good in that person no matter what they do, even if the person is a criminal or a comic book villain. I think your book, with its severe global disaster, is a good example of just how equal we all are as human beings and should be a testament of how all people can work together and relate on a colorless level. The fact that it's in black and white accentuates this, I think, but even that can't force some deep-seated people to be colorblind long enough to see the point. I try my best to advocate equality, but I'm only human and just as prone to mistakes in my opinions as anyone else. When people take those mistakes at more than face value and don't try to help one another understand rather than calling one another ignorant, then that is when the senseless bickering starts, and people forget that ignorance has a cure.

My point, in essence, was that Michonne gave me a completely opposite image compared to what she gave Charles L. and others who complained. I think Michonne's situation compares in terms of literature to The Color Purple. It is much more graphic and traumatic than the spousal abuse of the novel, but I believe that its ramifications carry a similar message of the strength of an oppressed person. I think those who complained looked only at the visual brutality of the act, and they may do well to look deeper. Acting on aesthetics alone seems to lead to the bleakest of arguments, and that is what we have here. Additionally, I agree with your rebuttal that reverse racism is subtle and not really an issue. I only wanted to state that it exists on the spectrum, and for the last several years I have seen a trend of black-on-black racism that tops it fairly easily. Case in point, the opinion among some that Barack Obama isn't really "black" because he isn't descended from slaves. We strive for equality, and yet we continue to create more labels to segregate ourselves even from our own groups.

On that note, I will fade back into the ether and return to my role as a spectator. I won't ever stop reading, but writing in (on this subject at least) goes too far afield. I may drop a line for general kudos, but I'm leaving this subject alone from here on out. This argument and racism as a whole just need to die off. Maybe the aliens need to land or the zombies need to rise up in this world so that we can work it out once and for all... or simply confuse the matter so much that no one even wants to touch it anymore (I think we're there already). Peace, in EVERY way possible for EVERY living being on the planet... may we reach that someday at the end of this rough road. Come on, people now. Smile on your brother, and all that 60s hippie crap. The words really do mean something once you get past the tone of the decade and all the psychedelic colors.

Sincerely,  
Aaron Conway

Sorry if I misunderstood the meaning of what you said. I've given you a chance to say your piece here in print as an apology.

I was surprised that there was no expansion of the fact that Billy just ran and left Dale being chewed on by the zombie. Dale was unconscious when Billy ran, but he must have remembered he was out there with the guy and wondered why he had to crawl away from the zombie himself and why wasn't Billy helping him or looking for him.

Drew Peabody.

Billy ran out of fear--it all happened quickly. Dale doesn't hold it against him. Dale looks at Billy as a child, making a child's mistake.

First things first, I love this comic series! I really do! You're doing it in a very different way from the other zombie tales out there ---you're allowing the story to be the main focal point, not the undead. And that takes guts. And that's also what makes you different --- and in my opinion, better--- from the rest!

It's easy to hack and slash (and that's important to have in a horror comic, uh, I mean, "Survivalist Adventure" ---btw, love the term!) but when you make the zombies the thing that drives the comic it gets old fast. But, I'm sure you know this, and that's why you haven't lost readership! I wish you guys all the success in the world and gratefully look forward to collecting the rest of this series for many years to come. It's an amazing comic!

That said, two things about this comic grate on me. (Hey, its constructive criticism... HA HA HA!) First, I've noticed that from time to time you've "recycled" images. You'll use the same drawing more than once on the page (sometimes with minor changes, like a smile added, or you'll put a hand on a shoulder for comfort,



or something like that. Sometimes, there will be no change at all.) And it sucks. It’s lazy. You shouldn’t do it. This comic kicks too much ass, to take such stupid liberties like that.

For example:

Issue #40, page 17, you use the same image twice, but with just the tiniest smile added.

Issue 37, pg 8 uses the exact same drawing twice.

Issue 6, page 10, you use the exact same image 3 times. And again... Issue #33, page 5 you use the same image of Michonne ---3 TIMES!!

I get it that the character looks like the character, and all that, and sometimes you are trying to convey a certain mood or something, but don’t be lazy. It’s a real turn off when reading a comic. And people DO notice it. (I was chatting with some other WD fans online the other week and that was a common beef that a lot of people shared.)

**What you’re referring to is commonly known as a “photo stat” or “stat” and we’ve done it just a smidge more often than the FOUR times you’ve noticed in FORTY issues. It’s a tool like any other, used to convey LACK of movement or change in a medium where there is NO MOVEMENT and it’s not something I’ll be stopping any time soon. They are scenes that are written in to the book as part of the story... not to save time, but to convey a certain action, or mood, or whatever. If Charlie were to draw the scene twice, aside from being frankly, unnecessary, it would also ruin the moment, because there would be a change. Any time you’ve seen anyone frozen in a moment of a movie or television show, stunned, scared or otherwise and they just stay there, caught in the moment... that would be a stat in a comic.**

**Besides... novelists use the same words over and over and over in books. Why can’t they just use new words? I’m right there with you, really... but those guys are just trying to cut corners.**

Second, why are the guys and gals wasting ammo on tin cans for practice, when they could be sniping the zombies standing on the other side of the fence? The SPLAT of a zombie’s skull exploding is much more interesting than the PTING of a tin can falling over. I mean, why not thin the herd if you’re just wasting ammo? Just a friendly suggestion. (That said, why aren’t they doing shifts in the guard towers? I mean if, they know Woodbury is a threat, common sense says put sentries on duty to watch for the possibly invasion.)

**Well, they must have thought the fences were their first line of defense, no need for sentries. And on the can thing, a can is a smaller, more narrow target, and would train people a little better. Later, they do go out to kill moving targets but shooting cans was a viable step toward that.**

Anyway, like I said, I adore this comic and hope it has a run for MANY, MANY YEARS!!! Just thought you might want to know what one of your biggest fans is thinking. Take care and keep it interesting!

-Clay in Canada

**In closing, stats are the coolest, my friend. I get a lot of pleasure spotting them in various books (they’re in virtually every comic) and noting the complexity of some. It adds an extra level to the reading experience. I hope you see things my way from now on, Clay.**

I would like to start out by telling you how much I enjoy your book. The other day I told a guy on line to pick up TWD instead of that Marvel Zombies garbage and explained how much better your comic was. I put TWD dead right up there with Strangers in Paradise and Powers in how you pace the story (even when nothing “happens” there are still significant events) and keep all the participants relevant. After all that high praise I feel like a dumb ass for a few minor issues(complaints), but here goes. Where are they geographically? I know they started out in Atlanta but other than Tyreese, his daughter,Michonne, the convicts at the prison, some residents of woodbury, and the father and son in the first two issues where are the black people( You did know Atlanta was the new chocolate city? )? You don’t even show that many black zombies. As a person of color I struggle with buying books that under represent us we have been a major part of this nation since its formation and have helped shape it in every way. That leads me to my last issue (Don’t get me wrong your book is still great) you seem to be feeding the stereotype of the black males infatuation with white women(maybe unintentionally). With his relationship with Michonne stalled will Tyreese now pursue Andrea? The final panels seemed to move toward that idea. I also don’t want you to think I’m a youngster talking out off his ass (I’m 40) these are issues I have dealt with and talk to my 16 yr old son, and nephews about all the time. Thanks for another great issue and keep up the good work. P.S. Please do not let Marvel talk you into any type of cross over. Don’t Sell Out.

Christopher Crayton

**What do you have against white women, Christopher? Anyway, as you can see by now, Tyreese is still very much with Michonne and he and Andrea are only friends... so no stereotype being fed here. Now, they are still in Georgia, but yeah... I guess we don’t have enough black people. Sorry about that. I’ll try to work some more in. Now, most of the residents in that area did go into the city of Atlanta and get turned into MORE zombies when the plague started... so our characters aren’t exactly from the area, so I’ve got that to use in my defense.**

**Also... there are a lot of black characters in this book compared to most other comics... but I don’t think that’s a good sign for my book as much as it’s just a bad sign for other books. Anyway, more black characters... request noted and logged.**

Hello Robert,

Issue #40 was a great read as usual. Things are looking to be shaken up real soon and I’m really looking forward to it!

In the letter’s page of that issue, a few people had questions about how long in advance you have plotted the book. I also have a question about it. This might have been asked in a previous issue, so I apologize if I’m being redundant.

You said that the book is plotted a long ways out... do you ever find yourself straying a bit from your plans but then eventually coming back on track? As an example, I remember reading that Jeff Smith had also plotted Bone in advance, but felt there were some things that needed to be addressed as he was going. One example was the Great Cow Race. He had no intention of showing it, until he realized he really should. Are there any instances like that in Walking Dead?

**Yes, a few, but I can’t mention some because they haven’t happened yet. Dexter and Andrew were originally just going to leave the prison--and not try to kick everyone out. But when I was writing issue 18, I figured “these guys wouldn’t just leave.” So I had to change the ending. Originally, Hershel was going to lose a leg, not Allen, but I decided so much bad stuff had happened to Hershel already with losing his kids and all, having him then also lose a leg would seem unrealistic... like I had it out for the guy... so Allen’s leg was lost. I also wasn’t planning on killing Allen, I loved Allen, until the issue he died in was being written. It just seemed like it needed**

**the extra punch of him dying... and so he died. Seemed like a good idea at the time.**

Also, when is freakin’ [www.kirkmania.com](http://www.kirkmania.com) be live?!?!?!

I’m tired of asking!!  
Roch Vaillancourt

**Soon... it’s actually being worked on. I think SOMETHING will be live before the end of October for sure.**

Wow. I just finished Number #40! Awesome work. I enjoyed the story very much. It was a nice chang of pace from the usual Boy meets zombie, Zombie bites boy storyline. I am really glad Dale is doing well and survived the bite. I like Dale and I hope the “old geezer” sticks around for a long while. I hope the Andrea sticks with him for the long haul. Looks like she is getting a bit friendly with that young whippersnapper, Tyreese. It is just nice to see the characters have some happy times for a change.

Your writing has drawn me into the characters and their lives. I actually care about what happens to them. And that, K-man, is the mark of a great writer. Your characters are rich and full of life. I look forward to watching their lives evolve over the next 460 issues. I know at some point others will come into the scene while others move on and I know they will all draw me in to their story.

And I just feel deep in my heart that you are going to have that crazy Governor show his ugly face again. He is going to be one screwed up looking dude for sure.

**Look at you, all seeing the future and stuff.**

Thanks for such a wonderful story line.

And thanks for having Rick shave. Man, he was kind of skuzzy looking, dude. Lol.

**Thank Charlie... he got sick of drawing facial hair.**

Hey, would it be too much for a prosthetic Dr. to show up at the prison so Dale can have a false leg? Or better yet, one of those pirate peg legs. How cool would that be?

**Again with the future seeing... I’m impressed.**

I just looked at the CSMoore website. Says my Rick Grimes fighting a zombie statue won’t ship until around November. That’s sad. I was really looking forward to getting it this coming month. Oh, well. I’ll be patient.

**I understand there was a problem with the factory in China, but it’s been resolved now... so it’ll be in your hot little hands soon enough.**

Keeping on creating your worlds, Robert. You do good work.

Now, if we can just get some solar powered video consoles at the prison for Carl.....

I guess that is too much though.

Take care.  
Michael Heffron  
“I sit in awe of the K-man and his worlds which he creates”

**Thanks for writing Michael, and for the kind, flattering words.**

Lord of Comics Kirkman,

First off i love your comic. No other in the entire world matches yours or-in my opinion-ever will. After that usual kissing up on to other things.

What are you doing with Dale? Damn you he can’t die! Those poor kids have been through enough without another “father” dying. Or maybe since as told earlier it’s not the actual bite that kills you and they have a doctor now... maybe she’ll just clean the wound of bacteria and he’ll survive! Right? Right?

**For now at least...**

Nice going on the similarities between the Governor and Rick. Makes the story a nice warning for him. You know, if he’s not careful or if his family dies he could end up like that...

I have to say i’ve enjoyed Glenn and Maggie’s storyline more than any other in the book. if you kill one of them so help me i’ll...i’ll drop the book okay that’s a lie i’d stay even if you kiled everyone and just had zombies and aliens wandering around.

**That’s good to know...**

One question, why does Axel say “you follow me?” after almost everything he says? I’m not complaining i actually like it. I was just reading some back issues and noticed he says that a lot. On that note I love Axel, he should have some more page time but I’m sure you get that request a lot for all the characters...on second thought just keep doing what you’re doing, don’t change a thing.

**That’s just a little personality tick to give him a unique voice. He’s like one of those guys who ends every sentence with “man.” Or something like that.**

I have to say after reading some of the letters pages i have to ask why can’t people tell the difference between the characters? It’s not that hard. I think it’s quite obvious if you actually pay attention to the book your reading.

Look! I’m not commenting on Michonne’s rape! shock! gasp!

**You blew it.**

**Anyhoo, thanks for listening to my ramblings and keep up the good work!**

Jessica R.

P.S. I’m a girl. so I’ll get printed right? please? pretty please with a cherry on top? you can even edit out that part about allen if i am spoiling it or something...

**I can’t come out and say I print every letter from a girl... or else people will just start saying they’re female to get printed... and we can’t have that. I get enough people acting like ladies on the internet. I don’t need it in my letters columns to.**

Hey, Kirkman... Still loving the book! A little slow this time, but pacing is necessary now and then... I was surprised to see Dale survive the zombie bite after how Allen died. Great job throwing us off the trail there. But I know how you hate hearing the same boring crap about how great you are, so I’ll get on to some questions about the letters (see, some people really do read them!)...

1. I’m really curious about this one. Why do you think washed out color would work



so well in a movie when you are so dedicated to keeping the book black and white? I'm not saying either is a bad idea, I'm just curious as to why you think the coloring should change in a different medium.

**I doubt anyone would want to make a black and white movie. It's not often done and the only time, in recent memory, it's been successful is Shindler's List. I don't think you'll EVER see a straight black and white TV show. I also think washed out color just looks cool.**

2. Did you print Valeria's letter get printed twice on purpose? It was a great letter and probably worthy of a second printing, especially since many people may have missed it in the previous and much longer lettercol... Just wondering if it was intentional or not.

**I think I printed it first, out of the order it came in to make sure it got printed... then accidentally forgot and printed it again because I'm a moron. I do these things late at night... never quiz me on letter column stuff... I'm usually in a sleep deprived stupor.**

3. Not a question, but I thought it was interesting that I got into comics much the same way you did... I was a big baseball card collector as a kid. One day, my friends dragged me to a new store that had opened that sold cards and comics. I had read comics on and off before, but after a couple trips to the store, I started picking up more comics... I still go to the same store every week, but I can't remember the last time I bought a baseball card...

**I honestly don't know why I was collecting baseball cards... I didn't know who anyone was and I never really watched baseball. Comics were a much better fit. I'm happier... aren't you?**

Finally, bring back the Rathburn back covers! I miss them! The poster looks great, but I still want to see some more of Cliff's artwork!

**Cliff is busy working on the new BRIT series--he's penciling, inking and coloring it. So no time for back covers!**

I didn't get issue 41 before issue 40... Your time machine must be broken.

Breaking promises again... YOU STINK!

Jim Amato

**You're right... I do stink. I'll go take a shower now.**

Robert,

Issue 41 was kinda a let down man, don't get me wrong it was great having issue 41 only a week after issue 40, I just thought it was kind of a weak issue.

My first complaint is about Alice, how stupid do you have to be to want to study the zombies, I mean come on, what a stupid idea, Rick should have killed that thing the minute she brought it into the prison, what do you really need to know about them "destroy brain = dead zombie" and is a prison hospital really set up to run test and shit like that? It's not like they have a laboratory in the prison, I really hope she dies soon, she is getting on my nerves.

**There's any number of things she could have done to that zombie with equipment from any medical center that would have taught her something more about zombies. She has a scientific mind... she's very smart, and she wanted to learn more about the enemy.**

Second I think you killed off Carol just a little too soon, she was just starting to get interesting, I would have loved to see some drama between her and Hershel "Sleep with my boy and you will burn in Hades, slut!" type of shit happening, and it would have been kinda funny to see her only talking to that zombie, spending all her time out there reading it stories and brushing its hair.

**Nah... it was time for her to die.**

Don't get me wrong I not saying that I'm going to stop reading it or anything, I was just a little let down. All in all though, it just makes all the other issues that much better. Anyhow I do have a few questions I'm hoping you would take the time to answer:

1) Will we ever see Dexter's buddy Andrew again?

**Probably not. But you never know.**

2) Any chance of having the group venture into a city again? I know it would be hard to find a reason to go, but it would be cool to see one again.

**Eventually, I'm sure.**

3) I saw a picture of cover 41 online a while before it came out, and the background looked blue, when I picked up my issue it was purple, did Adlard change it, or were there 2 different covers? (it's probably my favorite cover yet)

**It might just be your monitor. It's always been purple. Computers do that sometimes.**

Thank you for a great series  
Erik Porter

**Thanks for ripping my heart out and stomping on it about issue 41... you jerk!**

Kirkman,

WOW. I don't even know what to say. It was crazy enough to see 2 issues of Walking Dead in my comic shop, a mere week apart from each other...but that ending in #41...WOW. Billy was practically raped by Carol, and then her new best friend gave her a nasty hickey. Guess Lori's going to have to deliver on her promise now then, eh?

Other than the insane events with Carol, these two issues were pretty quiet. Lots of subtle things though. That's what I really dig about this series. There doesn't have to be any action at all, because the character interactions are so strong. An entire issue of Rick and Tyreese playing poker would probably be just as good as any other issue.

I cannot wait for the upcoming "no one is safe" arc, and the impending battle with the Woodbury jerks. Kinda worried about who's going to die next, but that's half of the fun in reading Walking Dead. You just never know. I'm also stoked about what's going on in Invincible (especially in #50...that cover has me counting down the weeks!). Wolf-Man's great too, but the bimonthly schedule is killing me. While I'm ranting and raving about your books, I gotta add that I'm going to really miss Ant-Man. Apparently he's going to appear in other series, but that's just not the same.

**He's in good hands with Dan Slott over in Avengers: The Initiative. You'll like what he's doing.**

A lot of people ask you what your favorite zombie movies are, so I'm going to ask something that I haven't seen asked in the letters pages (though i'm sure it has been...). What are some of your favorite bands and/or genres of music?

I guess that's everything for now. Keep on doing what you're doing, man!

-Dan O'Neill

**I think I answered this before. Some favorites just off the top of my head? Nick Cave, Neil Young, David Bowie, Bog Segar, The White Stripes, Holly Golightly, The Presidents of the United States of America, The Strokes, AC/DC, Aimee Mann, Tool, The Beatles... I'm sure there are others.**

Mr. Kirkman,

Why the hell would Rick wear his gun holster on his right hip?It's not like his stub is going to be winning any high noon duels...

**I'll talk to Charlie about it. I'm not sure he could just reverse it, and it's not like he could buy a new one. I'm not an expert on holsters.**

Thanks for killing Carol. Is it some sort of foreshadowing that the Zombie that killed her looks an awful lot like Lori? Poor Rick, if Lori dies his nipples are going to be SORE.

??

I'm really enjoying the book lately. It's great to see a shake-up coming up though, the survivors have spent enough time in that prison. Time to pack up the RV and head out to California.

Kudos!  
-Zach L.

**Sunshine!**

Dear Kirkman,

The cover was lost on me; even after reading the issue itself it took me some time to figure out that there even Was blood on Rick's face on the cover..I just thought it was a bad mug shot maybe. "Everything is GREAT. Now let's see how long it LASTS."? The shorter the better for me really! The soap opera quality of the book is nothing really compared to actual violence and meeting the new characters from Woodbury. Believe it or not, I'm still memorizing characters names; I'd hasten to remind you that the more you use character names the quicker it is to Get to know them...but we've been through all that before. I think you may have accomplished something I've never seen before--two issues of the same series in the same week! Same Day, really. What is it about Image that issues have Always come out late?? I've got this great thing you might wanna look into--it's called a Printing Press.

**You're right... we really should look into actually printing the books instead of conjuring them with magic. Good idea, Andrew. Also, the two issues shipped a week apart, not the same day.**

I think there could be more T&A, if people still use that term, here, sure. And breast-feeding doesn't count. Another thing I noticed this issue: Besides Lori all the other women have either blonde or red hair, freckles and a ponytail (or are they all the same person?); this makes it a Little hard to tell people apart. Oh, and I hate ponytails. I think ponytails went out with actual Pony's.

**Yeah, you don't see a lot of pony's around these days... I think they're extinct.**

Does Rick's prison population really have anything to worry about with the Woodbury gang? Unless they're flying in somehow, they'll have zombies to deal with first, right? Now that I think about it, I think the prison itself may be the worst thing about this series! It makes things too safe, ya know? If there was just a small gang of them in a van against the world--that might be a bit better. What state is all this taking place in, right now anyway? Are they close to Washington D.C.? Do they know what's happening there? What IS happening there? Well, I gotta go; more TWD to read.

Sincerely,  
Andrew J. Shaw

**They're in Georgia.**

Dear Captain Kirkman,

I think you kind of brushed off Martin Casanova in the letters column this ish; don't know if you've noticed, but there are more foreign-based people in American comics now than ever, and more and more all the time(I know that cause I can't pronounce the names!)...and 600 people for a graphic novel presentation sounds okay to me.

**I didn't mean to sound like I blew him off. Sometimes I read a letter and I just don't get the urge to respond to specific things, inspiration doesn't hit, but still, it seems like a readable, interesting letter... so I print it. I guess it could be taken as me blowing him off. As I recall, I remember the letters column for 41 seeming a bit dull as far as my responses went. I was having an off day.**

I personally am not a fan of so-called zombies, really. Zombies aren't the greatest conversationalists for one thing; but they can be scary! Ever wonder why they move so slow, Kirkman? Maybe it's a circulation thing. I found your explanation of how a zombie is created to be a little vague. Carol, we hardly knew ya. She actually hadn't appeared in a while anyway I don't think...guess you got tired of her. Course a cliffhanger is a cliffhanger, and she hasn't even turned zombie yet, right? There should be a better word than just zombie, dontcha think? TWD's maybe? Hey--I got a nickname! At least according to Rev. Occulto's letter this ish.

Sincerely,

Godboy Andrew J. Shaw

PS: Good issue once again.

**I thought a double shot of Andrew Shaw to wrap up this letters column would pack a bit more punch... you've let me down, Godboy. Try harder next issue.**

**And with that, I bring things to a close. I think this issue is shipping about five weeks after 42, so we slipped a week, but we'll try and make that up on 44. Things are moving along nicely, right? RIGHT?!**

**See you all again very soon,**

**-Robert Kirkman.**



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